

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Claims 1-21 (cancelled)

22. (currently amended) A method for transferring printing fluid onto a carrier material, comprising the steps of:

defining with print data picture elements of a print image to be printed onto the carrier material;

influencing a surface tension of a prescribed volume of a printing fluid when printing a picture element dependent on the print data belonging to the picture element such that without significant change in volume, the printing fluid having a first surface tension causing a change of a surface shape of a surface of the printing fluid so that a portion of the surface contacts the carrier material to moisten the carrier material, and does not touch the carrier material when the printing fluid has a second surface tension of said surface deviating from the first surface tension resulting in a shape of said surface such that the surface is positioned away from contact with the carrier material;

~~The method according to claim 20 wherein~~ the first surface tension has having a first value at which the surface of the printing fluid is arced outward into contact with the carrier material; and

the second surface tension has having a second value at which the surface of the printing fluid is one of planar and arced inward away from contact with the carrier material.

23. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~20~~ 22 wherein the surface tension is varied by varying a temperature of the printing fluid.

24. (previously presented) The method according to claim 23 wherein additives to the fluid evaporate upon variation of the temperature.

25. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~20~~ 22 wherein the surface tension is varied by varying an ionization of the printing fluid.

26. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~20~~ 22 wherein the surface tension of a prescribed volume of the printing fluid is varied.

27. (previously presented) The method according to claim 26 wherein the volume is dimensioned such that it corresponds to a volume of printing fluid to be applied onto a picture element having a color of the printing fluid.

28. (previously presented) The method according to claim 27 wherein the volume is prescribed by a volume capacity of a depression.

29. (currently amended) The method according to claim 28 wherein a plurality of the depressions are arranged in ~~fashion~~ matrix-like fashion on a drum-shaped surface.

30. (previously presented) The method according to claim 28 wherein the surface tension is influenced due to action of a radiation source directed through an aperture of the depression into an inside of the depression.

31. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~20~~ 22 wherein the surface tension is varied with the assistance of at least one of a temporally and topically drivable radiation source.

32. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~20~~ 23 wherein the printing fluid for all picture elements initially has a lower surface tension that is raised dependent on the print data.

33-40 (cancelled)

41. (new) The method according to claim 22 wherein the first surface tension is greater than the second surface tension.